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RHMFISS/WARRIOR BRAVO CC BALAD IQ
RHMFISS/HQ AFOSI ANDREWS AFB MD
RUWICBE/I MEF CAMP PENDLETON CA
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RHMFISS/ASAS 4THINFDIV FORT HOOD TX
RUEPUAC/MITT 4THINFDIV FORT HOOD TX
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SUBJECT: IRAQ PRTS WEEKLY ROUNDUP FOR 7-13 APR 06

11. (SBU) INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) report weekly their activities and progress towards helping the provincial governments achieve self-governance capability. The following paragraphs summarize their activities in several areas for the period 7-13 April. Sunni Arabs in Ninawa Province feel marginalized, while Kirkuk Sunni Arab politicians want early provincial elections. The Baghdad Provincial Government continued its boycott of the PRT that began March 27. Although Babil Provincial Government is talking to the PRT, communication is limited and has slowed progress in building governance capacity. The fuel shortage in Ninawa continued to cause difficulties and dramatically increased the black market sale of kerosene. Kurdish college students talked about their concerns with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Private business owners in Babil discussed barriers to starting and owning a business in Iraq. END
INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

(U) NINAWA PROVINCE

12. (SBU) GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC. Sunni Sheiks told Ninawa PRT members that they feel marginalized. They repeated suggestions that the security problems would go away if the Coalition Forces (CF) would pay them off. They minimized the influence of elected officials in resolving security issues and maintained that sheiks are in a better position to effect changes in Ninawa Province. In a separate meeting with PRT staff, Assyrian leaders emphasized their ongoing concerns with KRG efforts to encroach into Assyrian towns and villages in eastern Ninawa Province. The PRT has been working closely with Assyrian leaders and the CF regarding protection of minority rights in these areas.

13. (U) The Civil Affairs (CA) team in Tal Afar reported that more shops are opening every month. The general economy, however, remains weak. Unemployment is estimated at about 65%. The CA team secured a site for the business center and plans to use Commander Emergency Relief Program (CERP) funds to furnish the

center with computer equipment and basic furniture. Planning continued for the Ninewa Business Center to coordinate support for the Tal Afar center. Getting this business center operational is critical to continued economic growth in Tal Afar.

¶4. (U) The oil and fuel situation in Ninawa continued to deteriorate as another week passed without Turkish fuel imports. Residents reported that supplies of propane, the primary cooking fuel, are exhausted. Black market kerosene increased seven fold. There was no news concerning the "letter of credit" issued between Turkey and the Iraq Minister of Finance (MoF).

¶5. (U) RULE OF LAW. The Human Rights Committee Chairperson expressed confidence to the PRT that the committee and key community leaders, especially the Provincial Chief of Police, have significantly improved treatment of arrested persons and citizen access to information about arrested individuals. She agreed that detainee issues would continue to be monitored. She also expressed increased interest in the committee mission of social minority advocacy for women, elderly, handicapped, and the poor.

¶6. (U) INFRASTRUCTURE AND RECONSTRUCTION. The Dahuk Director of Electrical Transmission contacted the PRT for assistance in finding available funding for an electrical problem in Dahuk. Dahuk uses virtually all of the power imported from Turkey and Turkish imports account for over half of the electricity in the province. The Director is looking for approximately \$550,000 USD to install capacitor banks on the three

BAGHDAD 00001317 002 OF 004

main distribution lines into Dahuk. The PRT agreed to coordinate the request with the appropriate channels.

¶7. (U) Turbulent Tigris River flows due to heavy rains during the past two months have noticeably degraded water quality reaching homes. Drinking water treatment plant renovations within Mosul and the Tal Afar/Aski Mosul system are progressing well and will improve this situation. Short term capacity increases to pump stations, however, have exceeded the plant treatment capacity. Additional projects are required to increase treatment capacity to once again return to acceptable drinking water standards.

(U) KIRKUK PROVINCE

¶8. (SBU) POLITICAL. Sunni Arab politicians in Kirkuk told PRT Iraq Provincial Action Officer (IPAO) that the Sunni community in Kirkuk Province wants to benefit from U.S. outreach efforts, but asserted that the USG needs to work with political leaders instead of the tribes. They argued that the coming provincial elections would legitimize city council leaders and undermine tribal and terrorist influence. Therefore, they urged the USG push the Iraqi Government to hold provincial elections as soon as possible.

¶9. (U) Kurdish students and recent graduates from the Kalar area (southern Sulaymaniyah Province) talked about their plans with PRT IPAO to hold demonstrations on or around April 14, if the KRG did not respond to their demands to improve city conditions. They said protestors planned to prohibit government officials from entering the city for the eighteenth commemoration of the Anfal attacks in Kalar. Students from Kurdish student unions in Halabjah and Sulaymaniyah, in another meeting with IPAO, discussed a list of demands to the KRG regarding the aftermath of the March 16 violent protests in Halabjah. Their

demands included releasing the detainees as soon as possible; facilitating a transparent investigation and trial of the security officer who killed a 17-year-old student; permitting local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to visit detainees; permitting student and youth representatives to visit detainees; restoring a peaceful atmosphere by changing the language from pressure to understanding; and allowing representatives from student and youth unions to attend reconstruction meetings.

¶10. (SBU) The Provincial Council (PC) Chairman expressed displeasure at the assessment of Kirkuk Province in the Provincial Stability Assessment dated January 31, 2006. The PC Chairman obtained the news via a New York Times article dated April 9. (NOTE: The article contained parts of an unclassified assessment that was leaked to the press by an unknown source. END NOTE) He argued that the report was negative and questioned the lack of positive comments in the assessment.

¶11. (U) RULE OF LAW. The PRT Rule of Law (RoL) Coordinator visited the Police Training Academy in Al Sulaymaniyah. Approximately 1,000 recruits could be trained at any one time and the program runs throughout the entire year. Current recruits are from the provinces of Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Diyala, Salah ad Din, and Ninawa. Training is provided by an Iraqi staff. The attrition rate is approximately three percent.

(U) BAGHDAD PROVINCE

¶12. (SBU) POLITICAL. The PRT has not engaged in regular discussions with the PC since it ceased

BAGHDAD 00001317 003 OF 004

engagement with the Embassy on March 27. The PC declared that its decision applies to the Amanat (City Hall) and all other subordinate councils. Baghdad Mayor encouraged the PRT to disregard the PC directive. The PRT has informed the PC, including its chairman, through numerous informal communications that the PRT is ready to engage. Several subordinate councils have not endorsed the PC declaration and conveyed their disagreement to the PRT. While PRT communication with almost every sub-governate council has continued, it occurred only when initiated by the council members.

¶13. (U) ECONOMIC. PRT-Baghdad members finished a nine-month development of a turn-key seminar in Arabic and delivered it to the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, the Iraq Federation of Industries, and the Iraqi Business Center. Accessible through the Department of Commerce website, the seminar provides training on preparation of business plans for start-up or struggling companies to attract foreign partners, investment capital, loans from state-owned or private banks, micro-finance centers, foreign governments or multi-lateral lenders.

¶14. (SBU) RULE OF LAW. The PRT RoL coordinator visited Rasafa Prison, a Ministry of Justice (MoJ) facility near the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The cells were not as crowded as in the MoI detention facilities. The detainees whom the coordinator met were removed from the MoI "Bunker" in December. Of the 168 inmates removed from the bunker in December, 155 remain in detention. While detainees had scars, some of which were possibly from abuse and torture while in the Bunker, none complained of abuse since being detained in the MoJ facility. Most claimed they have yet to

see an investigative judge and many claimed that a bribe is required for release.

(U) BABIL PROVINCE

¶15. (SBU) POLITICAL. While some communication occurred between the PRT and the Babil Provincial Government, it continued to claim it is "boycotting" the PRT and CF. The standoff has hindered the PRT ability to promote and monitor governance action. National politics continued to affect the province as public discontent increased as politicians failed to reach a compromise and form a new government in Baghdad.

¶16. (U) ECONOMIC. Two representatives from privately owned businesses told PRT members that lack of lending institutions and energy sources keep them from reaching their potential. In another meeting, a successful hotel owner identified several problems and issues that confront Baghdad businesses. He said there are at least 22 agencies that must approve a new business. This creates a cumbersome bureaucracy with too many layers and discourages growth in the private sector. Both the provincial and national levels have no laws to govern foreign investment and resulted in a recent loss of potential Dutch investment. There is a lack of useful small business financing other than low value, high interest loans with a short payback period. He also argued that relevant state-owned enterprises should be privatized and returned to their original owners.

¶17. (U) RECONSTRUCTION. On April 11, the PRT conducted a Babylon Ruins site visit to review tourist potential and restoration requirements. The team met with lead site archeologist, two Babil PC members and the deputy head of security at Babylon. The site archeologist highlighted damage from CF, looters, Saddam regime, and decay from neglect. She pointed out canals reportedly dug by CF that she claimed jeopardize the foundations of Babylon ancient walls and the base of

BAGHDAD 00001317 004 OF 004

the Babil Tower. According to the PRT, her claim may be unfounded as the trenches are over 7' deep, appear older than three years, and have no military value.

KHALILZAD